



Climate Smart Kingston
420 Broadway
Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 481-7339

Meeting Notes

Wednesday March 25, 2015
City Hall Common Council Chambers
4:00-5:30pm

Present:

Julie Noble	Chairperson, Climate Smart Community Coordinator, Environmental Educator
Nolan Bastianelli	SUNY Ulster Student (Envi. Science Major, Secretary Environmental Club)
Elizabeth (Betta) Broad	Catskill Mountainkeeper, Solarize Hudson Valley, Kingston CAC
Suzanne Cahill	City of Kingston Planner
Alanna Henneberry	UC Department of the Environment, Deputy Coordinator
Nick Hvozda	ErtelAlsop, citizen
Kevin McEvoy	Heritage Area Commission, Conservation Advisory Council, Kingston Land Trust
Jennifer Schwartz-Berky	Principle, Hone Strategic
Casey Schwarz	Citizen, sculptor
John Wackman	Solarize Hudson Valley program manager, Repair Cafe

I. Welcome and Introductions

Each person introduced themselves, their backgrounds and expertise pertaining to Climate Smart Kingston and the role they might play.

II. Climate Smart Kingston: Brief History and Background

Julie gave a brief overview of how Climate Smart Kingston came to be a Commission:

- i. Kingston Conservation Advisory Council formed November 2008
- ii. Kingston CAC/City passed Climate Smart Communities Pledge in 2009
- iii. Climate Smart and Green Jobs Task Force Convened 2010
- iv. Climate Analyst was hired in 2011 by City under a NYSERDA grant; wrote Climate Action Plan and conducted GHG Emissions Inventory for city and community
- v. Task Force prioritized recommendations in Climate Action Plan with technical assistance from VHB in 2012/2013
- vi. Task Force renamed Climate Smart Kingston in 2013
- vii. Climate Smart Kingston identified 8 top SMART Goals for 2014
 1. Energy Advocated Program (in collaboration with RUPCO)
 2. Renewables Strategy (in collaboration with Sustainable Hudson Valley)
 3. Marketing and Communications Strategy
 4. Comprehensive Plan: Sustainability Language Integration
 5. Energy Upgrade in City Government
 6. Climate Action Success Tracking
 7. Economic Development Project: Broadway Corridor Streetscape Improvements (collaboration)
 8. Economic Development Project: Sewage Treatment Plant Energy Reduction Design (collaboration)
- viii. City earned Certified Bronze Climate Smart Community Status in 2014 (highest in the state) as part of state pilot program
- ix. Climate Smart Community Coordinator identified (Julie Noble) and Climate Smart Kingston Commission formally established under Resolution 120 of 2014

III. 2014 Goals: Brief Update

Each person briefly discussed their personal interests in the existing goals as well as other recommendations within the Climate Action Plan that haven't necessarily been addressed as primary goals thus far.

Themes:

-Lighting upgrades: Upcoming Forum on Municipal Street Lighting: April 2, 4-6pm

-Renewables/Energy:

Betta mentioned the possibility of engaging in CCA (Community Choice Aggregation). John discussed Solarize Hudson Valley and the first wave of the regional initiative will be Solarize Kingston, of which actions will include mobilizing volunteers, community workshops, partnering with RUPCO on energy reduction (which complements the Energy Advocates initiative). Casey discussed the value/feasibility of including solar thermal, as it has a rapid payback, in the first wave. Jennifer shared the importance of using design guidelines for historic buildings for installing solar and referred to the following: **Design Guidelines for Solar from the National Trust for Historic Preservation:** <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/buildings/solar-panels/design-guidelines-for-solar.html>. Kevin also offered his interest in looking at using his home, a historic home, as a pilot model for a solar installation. Sue offered the suggestion of signage at parks using solar energy.

-Energy Advocates:

The group expressed interest in continuing this initiative, in collaboration with RUPCO.

-Comprehensive Plan Language:

The group discussed how several participants have been closely working with/serving on the comprehensive plan committee and working to incorporate sustainability language into the updated Draft Kingston 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

-Green Buildings:

Jennifer shared that "the greenest building is the one that's already built," referring the group to a study on energy use and existing buildings: **The Greenest Building:** http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/green-lab/lca/The_Greenest_Building_lowres.pdf

Sue also discussed the nexus with the Planning Department and Board through Suzanne and how it should be a priority to address building rehabilitation, to include integration of sustainability principles, during renovations and new construction of community buildings and on city buildings. She also mentioned that there seems to be already an increasing awareness of developers towards these issues.

-Coordination with local civic and non-profit organizations:

Jennifer mentioned the importance of collaboration with groups such as the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Heritage Area Commission, Friends of Historic Kingston, the Urban Agriculture Committee, the Kingston Land Trust Rail Trail Committee, ReThink Local, as work done by each of these committees can be complementary and all relevant in ways to the Climate Action Plan. Jennifer offered to be liaison to the committees she serves on.

-Sustainability Tracking:

Nick expressed interest in working on ways to track, monitor and evaluate Climate Action Plan and GHG Emissions goals progress. Julie referred the group to www.midhudsoncsc.org where VHB has Case Studies and Best Practices with other municipalities in the Mid-Hudson Valley, including tools on how to report on progress

-Education and Community Engagement:

Nolan expressed interest in and stressed the importance of engaging the community and providing volunteer opportunities.

-Grow Local:

Nolan inquired about local community garden activity and the importance of community engagement with local food production. Jennifer directed him to www.grow-kingston.org and Julie referred to www.kingstoncitygardens.org for further info about urban agriculture. Kevin also expressed interest in urban ag, and Betta in composting initiatives.

-Community/Organizational Pledges:

Nolan mentioned the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), which dozens of institutes of higher education in NY and hundreds throughout the US have pledged towards reducing GHG emissions and promoting research and higher ed efforts towards mitigating climate change. Local institutional pledges (like that at the Kingston Library:

http://www.kingstonlibrary.org/pdf/trustee/kl_climate_smart_pledge.pdf) could be replicated throughout the city.

-Governmental Energy Upgrade:

Sue expressed interest in a focus on fleet efficiency and transitioning the city's vehicle fleet to more efficient vehicles.

Also mentioned:

-Land Use and Transportation

-Water Infrastructure and Waste Water Treatment Plant

-Bike Transportation and Infrastructure

IV. Commission Logistics

Julie presented the final adopted Resolution #120 of 2014, the formation of the Climate Smart Kingston Commission, which was adopted by the Common Council on June 3, 2014.

- General: mayor appointed members, Julie Noble as Chair, voluntary two year terms, 11 voting/3 non-voting/7 ex-officio members. There was a discussion about the role of the UC Dept of the Environment as ex-officio versus voting. Julie will follow up with Amanda LaValle.
- Appointment Process: Julie noted that she has received everyone's applications, as well as those of a few others who couldn't make the meeting. She noted that unless anyone has changed their intent, she would be submitting applications and recommendations for appointment following the meeting. Applications will then be reviewed by the mayor and appointments will be made, followed by adoption by the Common Council. Several participants offered to reach out to others who may be interested in serving. John expressed interest in serving. Julie will reach out to Sarina Pepper, who had been previously very involved.
- Meeting logistics: The group decided to establish the meeting length at 1 ½ hours and to begin with monthly meetings but upon the establishment of committees move to bi-monthly with committees meeting more frequently. Best days of the week were decided upon as Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday at the end of the work day. **The next meeting will be held on Wednesday April 29th, 4:30-6:00pm at Kingston City Hall, Conference Room 1.**
- For the next meeting (which, like all, will be open public meetings):
 - Adopting a mission and vision: Julie will share the mission/vision from the pre-transition Task Force and include some language from the Resolution, circulating this before the meeting for review.
 - Rules and Procedures: As is states in the establishing Resolution, "... this group will form rules of procedure as they deem necessary." Julie will create a draft Rules and Procedures, based on those of the Kingston CAC for review prior to the next meeting.
 - Establishing focus areas for action: start to establish, based on interest of the group, implementation capacity, funding feasibility, cohesion with the Climate Action Plan